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CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

The present document is submitted in compliance with decisions 11/1 and 11/2 of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. It reports on (a) progress in the implementation of the United Nations system guidelines and common indicators for the promotion of technical cooperation among developing countries; (b) the status, management and use of the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation; and (c) the organizational, administrative and financial arrangements of the United Nations Development Programme in support of technical cooperation among developing countries. Based on the results of the review, recommendations are put forth to improve overall support for technical cooperation among developing countries.

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I INTRODUCTION

1. In its decisions 11/1 and 11/2 dated 4 June 1999, the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, inter alia, urged all organizations of the United Nations development system to intensify efforts to ensure the mainstreaming of the modalities of technical and economic cooperation among developing countries (TCDC and ECDC) in their programmes and activities and requested the Special Unit for TCDC to develop, in consultation with the organizations of the United Nations system, common indicators for measuring progress and results on a system-wide basis. It encouraged all countries to make an effort to support TCDC and ECDC through contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation (hereafter referred to as the Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation) and requested the Special Unit to present a detailed report on the management and use of the Trust Fund at its twelfth session. In addition, the High-level Committee requested the Administrator, in connection with the mandated functions and increasing responsibilities of the Special Unit, to ensure adequate staffing of the Special Unit to enable it to execute its responsibilities effectively and requested the Administrator to report on the implementation of these decisions at its twelfth session, during which it would also review the revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures concerning TCDC.

2. Consistent with the above-mentioned decisions, the present report reviews progress made with regard to (a) the implementation of the United Nations system guidelines and common indicators for the promotion of TCDC; (b) the status, management and use of the Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation; and (c) the organizational, operational and financial arrangements made by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in support of TCDC. On the basis of the review of progress made, the report advances a number of recommendations aimed at improving overall support for TCDC.

II IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM GUIDELINES AND COMMON INDICATORS FOR THE PROMOTION OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

3. To mainstream the use of the TCDC modality in the operational activities for development of the organizations of the United Nations system, the Administrative Committee on Coordination approved the Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries in 1993. The guidelines were to be applied by those organizations, including the Regional Commissions, on an experimental basis. In 1998, the guidelines were revised to make them more consistent with the strategic orientation and focus of the new directions for TCDC, reflecting the changing international environment created by globalization and liberalization and taking into account new policy-related directives issuing from relevant decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, High-level Committee and Executive Board.[1]

4. The main objective of the revised guidelines was to streamline TCDC policies and procedures among the organizations of the United Nations development system to ensure that the use of the TCDC and ECDC modalities is treated as a matter of first consideration in the design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of the programmes and projects that they support or implement. For this purpose, the High-level Committee, as noted earlier, requested the Special Unit to develop common indicators for measuring and reporting on progress made by the organizations in the implementation of the revised guidelines.

5. To advance this process, the Special Unit, which has the mandate to facilitate United Nations system-wide coordination with respect to TCDC policies and procedures, organized an inter-agency meeting of TCDC focal points on 7 June 1999, following the eleventh session of the High-level Committee, to consider a common results framework. Foremost among the issues discussed was the recognition that while there were many development activities being implemented that were, in fact, TCDC and ECDC, much of the information on these activities was not being captured by the respective reporting systems of the organizations. The problem seemed to be related to the difficulty in attributing a specific financial value to TCDC and ECDC activities, owing to the increasing tendency of the United Nations organizations to treat all activities involving a number of developing countries as TCDC.

6. In view of the fact that each of the organizations of the United Nations development system has a different mandate with respect to its development activities, it was agreed that the Special Unit would take the lead in developing a common results framework by first introducing a set of indicators for use by the organizations on a pilot basis. This would allow each organization the necessary flexibility while focusing on the following three categories:

(a) Normative indicators, which measure the extent to which TCDC has been adopted as a corporate policy by the respective organizations, the degree to which TCDC has been integrated into programmes, the status of the TCDC focal point in the organization, and the efforts that have been made to advocate and promote TCDC and ECDC;

(b) Operational results indicators, which provide detailed information on the number and types of TCDC and ECDC activities supported by the respective organizations; and

(c) Innovative approaches to TCDC and ECDC, including successful practices disseminated for replication as well as new approaches to financing and broadening partnerships for TCDC and ECDC with the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

7. It was subsequently apparent that the way in which the organizations reported on their progress in mainstreaming TCDC and ECDC for the twelfth session of the High-level Committee reflected the general application of the pilot indicators.

8. In terms of policies and procedures, the information from the organizations of the United Nations development system, including regional commissions, for the present report indicates a strong consensus that there is an urgent need to respond to the Secretary-General's recommendation that "the work of the UN in general, and its operational activities in particular, must be increasingly oriented towards the support of South-South cooperation". There was also agreement that, for TCDC and ECDC to be integrated fully into the operational activities for development, all organizations must act upon decision 1992/41 of the Economic and Social Council to give TCDC first consideration in the design, monitoring and implementation of their regional and country programmes.

9. As reflected in document TCDC/12/1, all the organizations of the United Nations system have established their TCDC focal points and renewed their commitment to supporting TCDC. Many have introduced new policy instruments to mainstream the use of TCDC into their overall programme work. For UNDP, in particular, the Administrator has made several policy statements on TCDC, stressing the need to give a strong Southern dimension to the advisory services role of UNDP. The central role of South-South cooperation in delivering UNDP development services in the current programming period has also been incorporated into the UNDP Business Plans. At the Forum on South-South Cooperation in Science and Technology held in Seoul, Korea in February 2000, the Administrator announced the UNDP vision for South-South cooperation. Central to this vision is a strategy to "enable a more sustained and systematic transfer of proven and replicable experiences from the more developed to the less developed countries". In what he called a major new direction, the Administrator stated that UNDP plans to place South-South cooperation at the heart of future programmes and activities: "In the front line of our national execution arrangements with programme countries will be a new and explicit commitment to South-South cooperation as a means for delivering this support".

10. A number of organizations reported specifically on their innovative approaches. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), for example, has focused on innovative approaches to TCDC through a Partnership Programme that has transformed the nature of FAO services to the Member States by using expertise from developing countries and countries in transition, providing developing countries with an innovative mechanism and a structured framework to enable them to benefit from one another. The FAO Special Programme for Food Security is a new operational feature that has developed into a strategic TCDC initiative, the South-South Cooperation Scheme, providing for the transfer of experience from more advanced developing countries to other requesting countries through the long-term assignment of experts to implement food security schemes.

11. The International Trade Centre (ITC) has emphasized ECDC and TCDC with a commitment to support the mainstreaming of TCDC. This policy is reflected in a number of programmes, such as assisting interactive networks under a World Trade Net programme to build a critical mass of international trade-related expertise in developing

countries. The ITC is also active in promoting trade expansion in southern Africa by forging strategic alliances between southern African enterprises and creating a network of trade support institutions in the Africa region.

12 Innovations of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) include promoting TCDC through decentralized country programmes. UNFPA has also mobilized funding through triangular cooperation and its programme to strengthen centres of excellence provides for institutional exchanges of expertise.

13 Among the most effective approaches adopted were those designed to strengthen broad-based partnerships for South-South cooperation, especially with the private sector and the NGO community. Designed to overcome the constraint of limited resources in meeting the demands of developing countries by leveraging the capacities, expertise and resources of developing-country institutions, these approaches have led to various models using multiple partnerships in South-South activities. This strategy is being advanced through efforts using the pivotal country approach, triangular cooperation, participation by the private sector and NGOs, and centres of excellence in developing countries. These partnerships have contributed to building more dynamic TCDC linkages with respect to a select number of sustainable human development areas, with pivotal countries bringing a new dimension to TCDC and ECDC that is increasing the flow of technical assistance from the more developed to the less developed countries of the South. Programmes such as the Africa-Asia Business Forum promise to contribute significantly to South-South industrial and technological cooperation. Enhancing the collective capacities of developing countries also constitutes an important focus of many international development cooperation activities of the United Nations development system, e.g., the programme on globalization, liberalization and sustainable human development launched by UNDP and implemented by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The programme aimed at strengthening the capacities of low-income developing countries to design policy and institutional measures to facilitate integration into the global economy, using the South-South approach. The flagship approach to TCDC programming, an innovation of the Special Unit, would make such programming more strategic, build more South-South partnerships and in the process facilitate the leveraging of additional resources while ensuring broader ownership of the process.

14 The United Nations organizations have invested heavily in creating databases and information systems that make it easier to compile information and to provide access to technology for developing countries. A major development in the facilitation of the South-South information flow has been the conversion of the TCDC Information Referral System (INRES) into a fully Internet-based Web of Information for Development (WIDE) that was initiated by the Special Unit in collaboration with the Government of Brazil. WIDE is now evolving into a platform to accommodate similar initiatives so that all developing countries with access to the Internet will be able to find and receive information on expertise, best practices, and training and financing opportunities for enhanced cooperation among developing countries. United Nations organizations should intensify their efforts to help developing countries to generate relevant data for increased South-South exchanges. Developing countries, the United Nations organizations and other development partners should be encouraged to help to improve the quality of the WIDE platform and to take advantage of it by linking their databases with WIDE.

15 FAO is using information technology effectively in support of TCDC through its Emergency Prevention system for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES) programme, which has become an Internet-based early warning system against outbreaks of diseases and pest attacks. As noted earlier, ITC is building a critical mass of trade expertise in the South through support to interactive networks under the World Trade Net programme, which disseminates information on developments in the world trading system and supports national networks by providing advisory and training services on world trade issues. UNFPA is documenting and disseminating TCDC best practices through its country support team system. The Network of Local Government Training and Research Institutes (LOGOTRI), established by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), offers an effective platform for the introduction of new learning technologies such as Internet-based workshops based on the TCDC modality. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has expanded the outreach of WIPONET, a global information network designed to increase developing countries' connectivity and access to existing databases. In the World Health Organization, efforts are under way to bring the successful lessons on TCDC with regard to health in the Americas to African countries.

16. Building on the experience gained from the use of the pilot indicators, the Special Unit, in further consultation with the United Nations organizations, should develop, during the next biennium, the common results framework on TCDC and ECDC, with improved indicators for measuring, inter alia, the following: (a) increased use of TCDC in UNDP country, regional and global programmes as well as in those of other organizations of the United Nations system, as measured by the level of resources allocated; (b) an increase in the number of developing countries that play a more active role in providing advice on development policy, strategies, experiences and expertise; (c) increases in the numbers of sustainable partnerships forged and the amounts of additional resources mobilized in support of the implementation of platforms and flagship initiatives from the donor community, developing countries, private sector and civil society organizations; (d) number of innovative models of South-South cooperation developed for replication by interested partners within and outside of the United Nations system; and (e) use by pivotal countries of their capacities to support the integration of TCDC and ECDC.

III. STATUS, MANAGEMENT AND USE OF THE VOLUNTARY TRUST FUND FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

17. Responsibility for the overall management and use of the Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation rests with the Director of the Special Unit for TCDC, to whom all staff backstopping projects supported by the Trust Fund must report on a semi-annual basis. The Director, in turn, submits the report to the Associate Administrator. Staff members in the Special Unit have been assigned to manage the Trust Fund and the Special Unit's Ledger Manager has created a specific section for the Trust Fund in the ledger to ensure that expenditures remain within the level of commitments.

18. During the biennium under review, the Trust Fund received support totalling $487 000 as follows: People's Republic of China ($150 000), Republic of Ireland ($37 000), Republic of Korea ($200 000) and the Ford Foundation ($100 000). Of the total, $300 000 was used to support the Forum on South-South Cooperation in Science and Technology, which was held in February 2000 in Seoul, Republic of Korea. The Forum recommended the following: (a) establishing a South-South network that would link research and development institutions and other centres of excellence; (b) establishing effective mechanisms to facilitate technological cooperation among firms in developing countries; (c) increasing the human capital base by pooling efforts on education and relevant training programmes, with special emphasis on women; (d) sharing experiences regarding the contribution of science and technology to food security and poverty alleviation in developing countries; (e) establishing strategic South-South programmes of research and development with respect to vaccines, drugs and diagnostics for the prevention and cure of major communicable diseases in the South, such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS; and (f) devising and supporting mechanisms that would enable countries of the South to pool their technical, institutional and financial resources to undertake and catalyse South-South cooperation in science and technology for development.

19. The sources of income of the Trust Fund remained limited during the1999-2000 biennium. Therefore, the Special Unit for TCDC needs to promote awareness of the Fund and develop innovative TCDC programmes involving a large number of developing countries that would attract funding from interested partners through the Fund.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN SUPPORT OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

20. Serving as the substantive secretariat of the High-level Committee and the United Nations system coordinator on TCDC, the Special Unit for TCDC has a unique role in promoting and mobilizing global support for TCDC. During the biennium 1999-2000, the Special Unit functioned with its budgeted staff complement of seven professional and seven general service posts. As UNDP moved to mainstream its support to South-South cooperation, the Special Unit assumed greater responsibility for advocating, planning, and acting as a catalyst in the development of new models of South-South technical cooperation in programmes of the United Nations development system as well as in the developing countries themselves. Considering the increased responsibilities of the Special Unit against its limited financial and human resources, efforts were made within the First Cooperation Framework for TCDC, which included

the biennium 1999-2000, to concentrate on initiatives that would have a major impact on a large number of developing countries.

21. Consequently, the Special Unit initiated the flagship programming approach to include multiple partners and a large number of beneficiary countries to catalyse new models of South-South cooperation in six thematic areas where the TCDC modality provides a demonstrated advantage as well as added value for wider replication. To assist in these efforts, and in conformity with the policy of UNDP to decentralize and move operations closer to the field, the Special Unit decided to deploy two of its TCDC Specialists to the Africa and Asia and the Pacific regions.

22. During the biennium 1999-2000, total UNDP core resources allocated for the TCDC Programme totalled approximately $8.5 million. These funds were applied to supporting TCDC activities in the following main areas: building strategic policy and institutional capacities, nurturing TCDC knowledge-networking and forging broad-based partnerships for sustainable human development.

23. During the same period, non-core resources mobilized by the Special Unit for TCDC amounted to $11.9 million. About $11.3 million of this amount were contributed by the Government of Japan through the Japanese Human Resources Development Fund (JHRDF). The Ford Foundation also contributed $100 000 to a TCDC programme in the area of social development under cost-sharing arrangements. In addition, approximately $500 000 were received through the Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation. These funds were used mainly to support projects in the areas of poverty alleviation, trade and investment, aid management, macro-economic policy coordination and environment.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

24. Based on the review of the issues covered in the present report, it is recommended that:

(a) The organizations of the United Nations development system follow the revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures concerning TCDC more rigorously in designing their programmes and use the common results framework systematically in monitoring and measuring results;

(b) The United Nations development system intensify its TCDC mainstreaming effort, especially at the country level, by using country planning, programming and reporting mechanisms such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), cooperation frameworks at the country, regional and interregional levels, and the results-oriented annual report (ROAR);

(c) The Special Unit for TCDC be requested to increase the content of, and developing-country access to, WIDE and strengthen WIDE linkages with development-oriented networks in developing countries as well as those of the organizations of the United Nations development system;

(d) The Special Unit prepare clear guidelines on the Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation to popularize the Trust Fund, and develop strategic programmes with a view to mobilizing additional resources in support of TCDC initiatives.

Notes

[1] In paragraph 3 of its resolution 52/205 of 18 December 1997, the General Assembly took note of the draft revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. Subsequently, the Economic and Social Council, in its decision 1998/284 of 31 July 1998, took note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the revised Guidelines for the Review of the Policies and Procedures concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

[2] The pilot indicators are described in the annex to the present report.

[3] Kofi Annan, "From the 38th floor: Interview with the UN Secretary-General", Cooperation South, no. 1, 1998, p. 74.

Annex

UNITED NATIONS COMMON RESULTS FRAMEWORK ON TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - PILOT INDICATORS

While developing countries have the primary responsibility for managing and financing TCDC, the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) calls on all the organizations of the United Nations development system to be fully mobilized "in order to contribute to implementing this Plan of Action on a continuing and intensive basis."[1] For this purpose, the Secretary-General also emphasized, in his reform agenda, that "the work of the United Nations in general, and its operational activities in particular, must be increasingly oriented towards the support of South-South cooperation".

At its eleventh session, the High-level Committee on TCDC once again "urge[d] all the organizations and agencies of the United Nations development system to intensify efforts to ensure mainstreaming of the modalities of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries in their regular programmes and activities, taking into consideration the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on this subject,"[2] which was endorsed by General Assembly resolution 53/192 of 15 December 1998, and in this context, requested the Special Unit, in consultation with the organizations and agencies of the United Nations, to develop common indicators for measuring progress and results in implementing these recommendations on a system-wide basis."[3] The Secretary-General is required to submit a report in this regard to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session in 2001.

A United Nations common framework of indicators for measuring and reporting on progress and results with respect to TCDC and ECDC is thus needed in order for all the organizations of the United Nations development system, including the Regional Commissions, to have a common understanding of the issues as well as the scope of reporting.

The following is a set of pilot indicators to be used for future reporting on progress and results achieved by the United Nations development system. More detailed indicators will need to be developed in consultation with and on receipt of comments from all parties concerned.

1 Normative indicators

1.1 TCDC adopted as a corporate policy and priority of the organization, as reflected in the organization's programming and operations manuals.

1.2 Extent to which TCDC and ECDC modalities have been integrated either as a strategy or distinct element of the UNDAF and country, regional and global programmes.

1.3 Specific unit or individual designated as focal point.

1.4 Advocacy and promotion for TCDC and ECDC undertaken.

1.5 Funding for TCDC and ECDC systemized under regular/programme budget (actual or estimated resources allocated for TCDC and ECDC purposes).

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[1] BAPA, recommendation 32, para. 56, 1978.
[2] A/53/266/Add. 4.
[3] High-level Committee, decision 11/1B, operative para. 13.

2. Operational results indicators

2.1 Extent of support, under TCDC and ECDC arrangements, to developing countries in their follow-up to major global conferences (as applicable) and the ensuing results.

2.2 Forums/events facilitated for the furtherance of South-South policy dialogue, intellectual exchanges, trade/investment promotion, capacities/needs matching, business-to-business fairs, etc. (specify topics, sectors, participating countries and entities and, to the extent possible, their results).

2.3 Types and numbers of South-South networks (including information networks) or centres of excellence supported and the ensuing results (specify sector and participating countries and institutions).

2.4 Major regional, subregional and interregional TCDC and ECDC schemes supported and the ensuing results.

2.5 TCDC and ECDC activities involving the private sector and NGOs.

2.6 Concrete South-South transfer/exchange of technologies, expertise and skills as a result of the concerned agency's direct intervention (types, sectors, number of experts, etc.).

3. Innovative approaches to TCDC and ECDC

3.1 Development of innovative approaches that have substantially expanded South-South cooperation (especially in terms of intra-South cooperation in trade, investment and finance, industry and enterprise development, agriculture and food security, environment and energy, health and population, information and communication).

3.2 Successful practices identified, compiled and disseminated for possible replication (to the extent possible, specify experiences replicated).

3.3 Innovative approaches to mobilizing resources for TCDC and ECDC (including from developing-country governments, donors under triangular arrangements, and other sources).

3.4 Innovative approaches to broadening partnerships for TCDC and ECDC, especially with the private sector and NGOs.